1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-S (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

Further material awaiting publication includes studies of string figures, myths, stories and chants, and the life of children. A dictionary of the Pukapukan dialect and a study of Pukapukan anthropometry are in preparation.

INTRODUCTION

We spent about seven and a half months on Pukapuka, from November 3, 1934, to June 13, 1935. For six months of this time we lived in a coral lime house in the middle of Yato village. During the copra-making period we lived for six weeks in a native house in the settlement of Ngake village on Motu Ko.

Everyone on the island was interested in our work and willing to help. Genealogies and traditional history were recorded at formal sessions in ethnology carried on in the schoolhouse and later in the courthouse; as many as 30 men attended these sessions. One man acted as spokesman. He was interrupted frequently by those who thought he had made a slight error, and many fierce arguments were conducted between upholders of conflicting views before a compromise was reached and the discussion could proceed. More select were later sessions in the courthouse, usually attended by about five of the best informants. The systematic consideration of each phase of Pukapukan culture was taken up in these more intimate sessions. Principal informants were: Veti and Mitiuna, both over 65 years old; Elia and Pau, both about 50 years old; and Talainga, about 40 years old. Pau was undoubtedly the scholar of this group. Though comparatively young, he was a keen student of things Pukapukan, equally well informed on all aspects of the culture. Veti and Mitiuna were well informed in their own right but functioned more as consulting authorities than as original informants. The youngest of the group, Talainga, made up for disadvantages of age by keenness and conscientiousness. At our suggestion he wrote several notebooks full of old chants and stories which are models of Pukapukan prose and verse. Elia was a reliable and willing informant. His wife, Mofingi, about 33 years old, was a most capable and enthusiastic informant on the women's aspects of Pukapukan life. The high chief, Nawasi, whose great age—about 100 years—rendered his memory unreliable, was unfortunately not a very valuable informant.

Our arrival on the island and our stated purpose to study the life of the Pukapukan people with reference to the ways and customs of pre-missionary times created something of a sensation. The process of rethinking themselves, under our stimulus, back into past times and of recapturing past customs was necessarily a slow one, but, once started, informants went ahead with enthusiasm and interest. At first their memories were somewhat haphazard and vague, but after several months of inter-group discussions and revival of old chants, informants were able to speak with increasing assurance about old-time practices.

9:Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1934-1935) 1939
OZ.11 Pukapuka OZ.11

Lua is 34 years of age. She is friendly, intelligent, and capable. She was one of our best informants, and her honesty is unquestioned. 115

LUA'S STORY

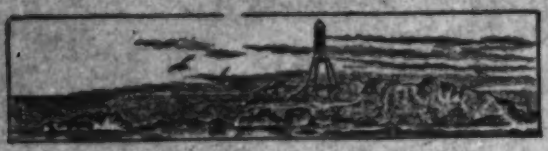
My parents, now deceased, were members of Loto village. I was their first child, born in 1902, when they were both fairly young. Four children were born subsequently but all died. My parents never adopted other children. I was adopted soon after birth by an old couple who had also adopted my father when he was a boy. I lived permanently with this couple from the time when my adopted mother weaned me. I learned at about the age of five that they were not my real parents. No one, as I remember, told me of the fact of my adoption, but on those occasions when my real parents took me to their house for a day I noticed that they treated me differently from my adopted parents. They seemed much kinder to me and much more loving. In some way I must have sensed the situation. I cannot say now very definitely how they treated me but I must have been gradually impressed by something or other. Later on, other children commented to me on the way I was going to my blood-parents and then I was certain. I was always happy to see them. 159 [165] [597] 159 593 597

Shortly after this my adopted father died. I felt pity for my adopted mother thereafter, but I really longed to be with my blood-parents. My adopted mother was uniformly kind to me. The old lady was specially solicitous about me whenever I got into quarrels, and always sought out the one who injured me in childish squabbles and scolded her soundly. This was quite noteworthy, because other parents were not so concerned for their children and let them get on with their companions as best they could.

My visits to my blood-parents became infrequent and continued so until the death of my adopted mother which occurred when I was about 12 years old. I remember the death-scene and the mourning-wake, but it was just like other wakes and I cannot remember my feelings at the time. After this I returned to live permanently with my blood-parents. Then it was that the last child was born to my mother. I remember this. I with other children stood 159 593

Il: Hutchin M-2 (1904) 1904 Pukapukans

173



TRADITIONS AND SOME WORDS
OF THE LANGUAGE OF DANGER OR PUKAPUKA ISLAND.

By the Rev. J. J. K. Hutchin.

IN the month of May, 1904, accompanied by Lieut-Col. Gudgeon, C.M.G., I paid a visit to Danger Island, recently annexed to the Colony of New Zealand. It is a solitary atoll more than seven hundred miles to the north-west of Rarotonga, with a population of nearly five hundred people. Only one vessel has visited the Island since the visit of the s.s. "John Williams" in October, 1906. Owing perhaps to their want of communication with the outside world the majority of the people seem somewhat duller in intellect than the other Northern Islanders. One of the most intelligent of the natives is a man named Ura, and during our short stay there I gleaned the following information from him.

"Bukabuka was a rock in the ocean. A god named Tamaya watched the rock, and thought it to be of no use whatever. The rock, however, burst asunder, and a man appeared. He looked about him, and there was hardly standing room. He accordingly made the land of Bukabuka, and he was the ancestor of the people. His name was Uyo. His wife came from Tonga, and her name was Te Vao-pupu. Their son was named Tu-muri-vaka, and their daughter was named Te Mata-kiato.

In very ancient times two warriors came from Tonga, one was named Tokai-poro, and the other Taupe-roa, and they settled the people in three districts, one was called Avarua or Kotiporo, another Te Awae (v pronounced like w) or Pana-uri, and the third Taka-numi or Ure-kava. In those days the *kumara*, the sugar cane, and arrow-root grew on this Island. (The *kumara* plant flourishes now but has no tubers; the sugar cane grows when planted in the *taro* patches, but there is no arrowroot there at the present time).

They went to many lands in ancient times. Their warriors went to the east and west, but not to the north or south. The people went from Bukabuka (its ancient name was Nukuroa) to Samoa, to Niue,